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ABSTRACT

This document comprises an interim evaluation report for the Portland Peers Project, a comprehensive drug education program that serves students in grades 6-8 in all Portland (Oregon) middle schools, for the 1989-90 academic year. It is noted that data were collected through an initial assessment survey, a parent questionnaire, a student peer helper scale, and a review of the literature on peer assistance programs. This interim report presents preliminary findings related to the project's assessment of drug use by middle school students, results of the peer helper scale, and findings from the parent survey. The report also describes demographics of the treatment and comparison groups of students. Results are presented and explained in five tables showing: (1) distribution of peers project students by grade and gender; (2) distribution of peers project students and comparison group by ethnicity; (3) mean pretest, posttest, and change on peer helper scale by group; (4) mean, standard deviation, and change on peer helper subscales by group; and (5) parents' perceptions of the program. Findings are presented which show that the program established a coordinated peer support system in the middle schools during 1989-1990, and that the project achieved its expected effect of increasing middle school students' helping skills as measured by the Peer Helper Scale. The results of the initial assessment of drug use by middle school students were inconclusive. A 12-item bibliography is included and a summary of the initial assessment of student drug use is appended, along with instrumentation. (TE)

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PORTLAND PEERS PROJECT

1989-90 Interim Evaluation Report

Stephanie Mitchell

August 1990

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PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS' ALCOHOL AND DRUG PROGRAM

PORTLAND PEERS PROJECT, 1989-90

INTERIM EVALUATION REPORT

prepared by

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August 1990

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INTRODUCTION

As requested by the Portland Public Schools' Alcohol and Drug Program, the Research and Evaluation Department conducted an evaluation of the Portland Peers Project (PPP). This comprehensive drug education program served students in grades six through eight in all Portland middle schools. The Portland Peers Project was funded by a U. S. Department of Education Drug-Free Schools grant and is currently being implemented in the schools from October 1, 1989 through March 31, 1991. This interim report describes the first half of the project's implementation period.

In the past decade, peer assistance programs in schools have emerged as one of the most significant contributions to school-based student services. Peer programs are not new. In the 1970's schools began training students to talk to one another as a way of combatting drug abuse. The current generation of student assistance programs emphasizes problem solving, student empowerment, and referral to professionals in the community. A strong component of the peer assistance model is drug prevention education for students, staff, and parents. The peer assistance program aims to show that while students often have problems, they can also be part of the solutions.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Portland Peers Project is a multifaceted student assistance program in which kids help kids and act as valuable resources to each other. The program is based on the concept that adolescents talk most freely and listen to friends and peers when they are troubled. During 1989-90, the project trained approximately 400 middle school students and 85 staff members in 17 middle schools as peer helpers. The goals of the project are to promote drug-free schools by:

- Establishing a coordinated peer support system in the middle schools
- Identifying students and staff perceived as natural peer helpers
- Training identified individuals in communication, substance abuse prevention, decision making, information referral, and helping skills
- Providing helpful information and support to problems faced by students

School counselors, consultants, and the Alcohol and Drug staff believe that peer helpers can provide faster, more efficient, and ongoing support for students with problems. Parents describe the program as increasing their children's self-esteem and self-confidence. Student peer helpers themselves make the following comments.

I liked the peer helper training because my friends ask me for information all the time and now I know I can help them, but I also know where to get help if I can't help them myself.

I like being a peer helper because it means more than just telling a new kid at school where the cafeteria is. I talk with them and see how they're doing after a few weeks.

The first step in the implementation of the Peers Project was a peer nomination process asking students who they talk to when they have a problem. Staff also made recommendations on potential peer helpers. These individuals were identified as the natural support system in the school. They were invited to attend a two and one-half day retreat outside of school to develop their helping skills. Participants were trained in listening skills, trust building, problem solving, decision making, and helping skills with peers in day-to-day interactions and crisis situations. Students also learned how to assess situations, determine criteria for referral to an adult or to other community resources, and recognize limits in helping relationships.

Following the training, peer helpers return to their schools, identify possible roles, and are absorbed into the day-to-day interactions of students. They meet at least monthly with the school-based counselor or coordinator to receive follow-up training and support in helping skills. Examples of peer assistance include: orientation guides to new students, conflict managers, peer assistants to help students with day-to-day or crisis problems, student lobbyists for drug-free schools, academic tutors, assistants for special school projects, cross-age facilitators introducing fifth graders to middle school, and buddies to handicapped students. Peer helpers are not counselors or therapists. The students were trained to know their limitations and refer students in danger to an adult.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The study explored six questions identified in discussions with school counselors and project coordinators. The evaluation questions were:

1. How did the project effect the number of school alcohol and drug abuse referrals?
2. How successful is the project in adopting or developing a comprehensive anti-drug peer program at the middle school level?
3. How did the project develop an anti-drug cross-age peer training program provided by students in grades 6-8 to students in grades 4-5?
4. To what extent did the project develop programs and materials involving parents of peer helpers?
5. What is the project's assessment of drug use at the middle school level?
6. To what extent did the project assess the effectiveness of the peer helper process in preventing drug and alcohol abuse?

METHOD

Data collection methods were developed to answer each evaluation question in the most appropriate manner. Methods included an initial assessment survey, a parent questionnaire, a student peer helper scale, and a review of the literature on peer assistance programs. This interim report presents preliminary findings related to three evaluation questions -- the project's assessment of drug use by middle school students, results of the peer helper scale, and findings from the parent survey. The report also describes demographics of the treatment and comparison groups of students.

The PPS Peer Helpers Scale was the measure used to collect data on the students' attitudes about five peer helper variables: 1) knowledge about helping, 2) helping skills, 3) listening skills, 4) trust building, and 5) student empowerment/decision making. The scale was adapted from the Student Attitude Index (Instructional Objectives Exchange,

1983). The scale contains 25 items with high internal reliability ranging from .75 to .92. The items use a four-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Students respond to statements based on their current attitude about providing helping services to their peers. The Peer Helpers Scale was administered to 389 program students and 379 comparison students in winter 1989 and again in spring 1990. The Peer Helper Scale is included in appendix B. Appendix C summarizes the school responses.

An initial assessment of drug use by students at the middle school level was conducted in January 1990 (see appendix A). A parent questionnaire (appendix D) was developed cooperatively by the project staff and evaluation specialist to collect data on parents' perceptions of the program. Appendix E summarizes the parent responses.

RESULTS

The data are presented according to the four information sources listed above. The interim report contains only partial information on the evaluation questions. Thus, only preliminary conclusions are included in this report with no recommendations. The final evaluation report will present all the data collected on the evaluation questions, including information on student achievement, attendance, grade point average, number of referrals for alcohol and drug assessment, as well as make recommendations.

Student Demographics

A total of 389 middle school students and 85 school staff participated in the Portland Peers Project training. In previous years, a small number of students had been trained in selected schools, but the grant allowed each middle school to train an additional 25 new peer helpers during 1989-90. Table 1 shows the distribution of student peer helpers by grade and by gender. As planned, schools selected more sixth and seventh graders (36% and 40% respectively) because eighth graders (24%) would only have one year in the program. Girls (55%) outnumbered boys (45%) in the program; district enrollment by gender in the middle schools is 50.4% male and 49.6% female.

Table 1

Distribution of Peers Project Students
by Grade and Gender, 1989-1990

Group	Male	Female	Total
6	63	77	140
7	68	83	151
8	41	49	90
Total	172	209	381

Table 2 presents the number of peer helper and comparison students by ethnicity. The representation of minorities in the program (30%) approximates the district (27.3%). Program students were 2% Native American vs 2.0% districtwide, 16% African American vs 15.4% districtwide, 8% Asian American vs 7.5% districtwide, and 4% Hispanic American vs 2.4% districtwide.

Table 2

Distribution of Peers Project Students
and Comparison Group by Ethnic Group, 1989-1990

Group	Native American	European American	African American	Asian American	Hispanic American
Program	7	267	61	32	14
Comparison	8	267	69	25	8
Total	15	534	130	57	22

Initial Assessment of Student Drug Use

An initial assessment of drug use by middle school students was conducted in January 1990. The assessment survey asked middle school counselors and school-based alcohol and drug coordinators to estimate student drug use by grade level and sex based on the referral rate in their school. The findings of the initial assessment generally

follow the patterns of similar state and regional drug use surveys. The assessment found that a substantial number of Portland students have tried alcohol and other drugs and the prevalence of drug use varies by grade and by school. Counselors reported that at sixth grade, students have most often experimented with the gateway drugs of tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana. By ninth grade, many students have also tried hallucinogens, cocaine, inhalants, stimulants, and other drugs. Analysis of the survey presented a mixed picture of student drug use with strong evidence that use increases rapidly during the middle school years. Alcohol and drug use was reported at approximately 12.2% for sixth graders, 22.3% for seventh graders, and 30.2% for eighth grade students. All 17 schools reported that their students use cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana. Twenty percent of the schools reported student use of hallucinogens, cocaine, inhalants, uppers, and other drugs. Appendix A summarizes the initial assessment of student drug use.

Peer Helpers Student Scale

Table 3 summarizes the overall pre and post results for the 1989-90 Peer Helpers Scale. Students completed the pretest in November-December 1989 and the posttest in May 1990. The responses reported are the "clear and intact" population, that is the respondents who had valid scores in both pre and post (clear) and who recorded those scores in the same school (intact). Results of the scale indicate that the peer helper students (PPP) showed more overall improvement in their ability to help peers with problems than the comparison group. The mean change between the pre and post scores for the peer helpers is .68; the mean change for the comparison group is .20.

Table 3

Mean Pretest, Posttest, and Change
on Peer Helper Scale by Group

Topic	Pre	Post	Change
Peer Helpers	20.53	21.21	.68 *
Comparison	20.32	20.52	.20

* $p < .05$

Table 4 compares the Peer Helper Scale pre and post responses by subscale. On the pretest, the program and comparison groups' scores were similar. On the posttest, the peer helper students scored significantly higher than the comparison students on five Peer Helper subscales: 1) knowledge about helping peers, 2) helping skills and behaviors, 3) listening, 4) trust building, and 5) student empowerment and decision making. The comparison groups' scores did not change significantly from pre to posttest, except in student empowerment. Thus, students who participated in the Portland Peers Project significantly increased their skill and ability to help other students with problems.

Table 4

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Change on Peer Helper Subscales By Group

		Pretest		Posttest		Total
Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Change
Knowledge						
PPP	341	19.99	2.3	20.88	2.1	.89 *
Comparison	311	20.06	2.4	20.06	2.6	.00
Helping						
PPP	344	21.27	2.0	21.90	1.9	.64 *
Comparison	329	20.73	2.3	21.10	2.5	.37
Listening						
PPP	339	20.00	1.8	20.79	1.8	.79 *
Comparison	314	19.70	1.8	19.89	2.0	.20
Trust						
PPP	339	21.14	1.8	21.57	1.8	.43 *
Comparison	327	21.03	2.1	21.06	2.2	.02
Student Empowerment						
PPP	347	20.27	2.0	20.90	1.9	.63 *
Comparison	333	20.10	2.0	20.53	2.2	.43 *

* $p < .05$

The pre and post Peer Helper Scale scores and mean difference for the 17 middle schools are provided in appendix C. Overall, 71% of the schools made significant gains in the knowledge category, 53% of the schools made meaningful gains in helping skills, listening skills, and trust building, and 59% of the schools showed significant improvement in student empowerment and decision making.

Parent Questionnaire

In May 1990, a questionnaire was sent to parents of 197 Portland Peers Project students asking their perceptions of and involvement with the peers program. The questionnaires were mailed to a stratified random sample of parents. The survey obtained a 64% response rate with 126 parents responding to the questionnaire.

Parents enthusiastically supported the program (64%) with the following positive comments about increased self-esteem and confidence exhibited by their children.

> *It (the training) was an excellent opportunity for my child...By training her to help others, you enhanced her own self-esteem and problem solving...Thanks for the great experience you have given my son...My child said the training was a real turning point in his life...Since she was selected, more teenagers call for advice, it's like Dear Abby at our home...Bravo to those who created this program of kids helping kids.*

On the opposite side, the project did not follow-through with the plan to involve more parents in the program and in the Preparing for the Drug (Free) Years training. Parents (66%) reported they were not kept as well-informed about the activities of the student peer helpers as they would like. Parents asked that the schools provide more information and more regular communication about the program. A third of the parents said that while the training and consequent self-esteem were very helpful to their children, it bothered the children to be selected and then not used regularly or in meaningful ways. This discrepancy between perceived vs. actual use is an important factor to be considered as the program expands to the high schools next year.

Figure 1 summarizes the parent involvement in the program. Orientation meetings at the schools to acquaint parents with the peer helpers program were attended by 28% of the parents. Many parents (18%) received notes from school counselors informing them about the program. Other parent involvement activities included attending Parent's Night (13%), participating in peer helper training (12%), serving on an Advisory Committee (2%), and attending Preparing for the Drug (Free) Years training (1%).

Figure 1
Distribution of Parent Involvement in Portland Peers Project, 1989-90

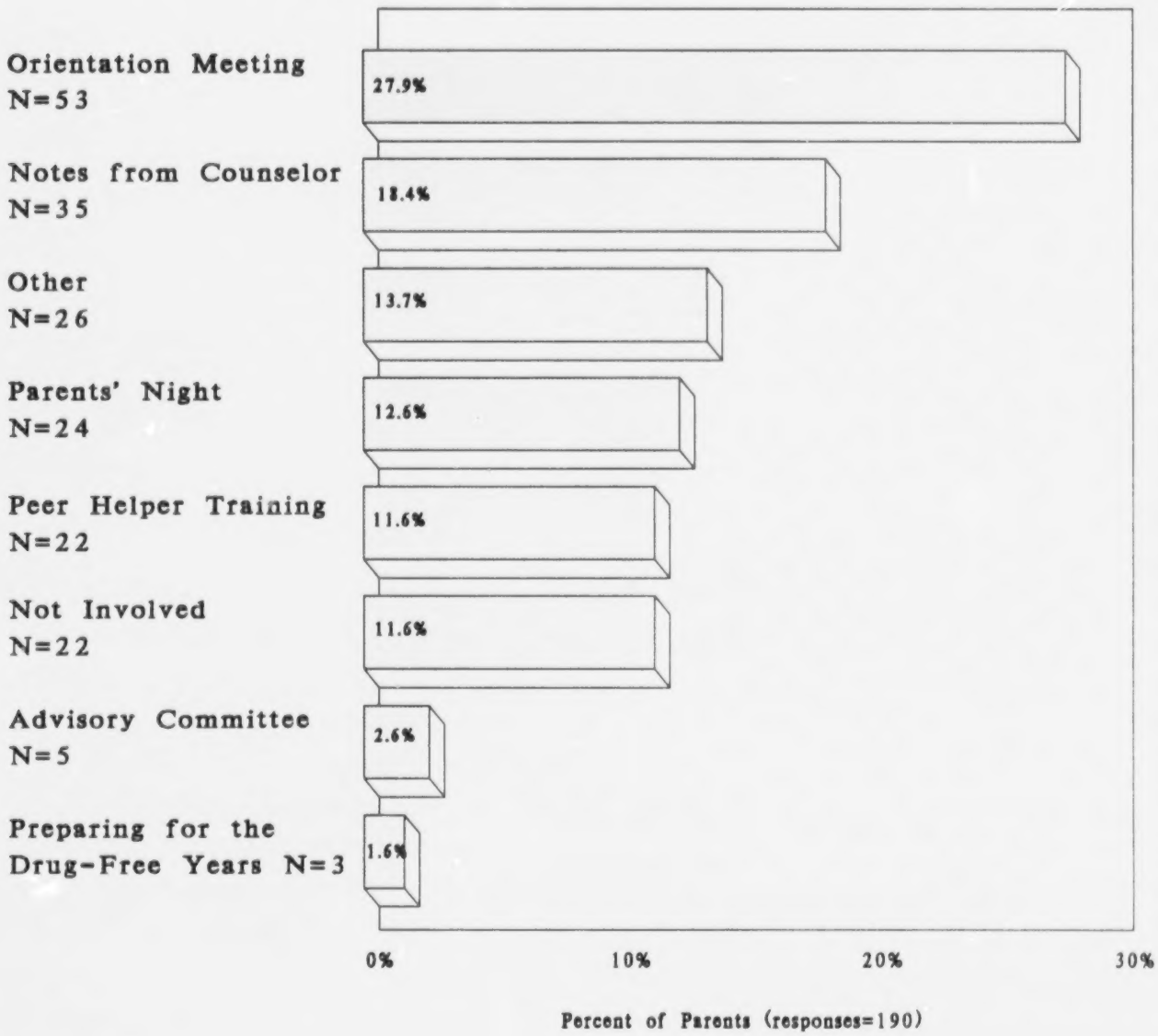

Table 5 presents the results of the questionnaire relating to the parents' perceptions of communications with their child and satisfaction with the project. The respondents were asked to express the extent of their agreement with two statements using a scale ranging from no communication/not satisfied (1) to weekly communication/ very satisfied (5). The average rating was calculated for each item. Parents indicated moderate levels of communication (3.77) with their child about their role as peer helper and very positive satisfaction (4.23) that the program experiences helped their children. Appendix E provides a complete summary of responses to the parent questionnaire.

Table 5

Parents' Perceptions of the Program (N = 126)

ITEM				
1. How often did your child talk with you about their role as a peer helper?				
		Mean = 3.77		
		⬇		
5 Weekly	4	3 Monthly	2	1 Never
2. How satisfied are you that the program experiences helped your child?				
		Mean = 4.23		
		⬇		
5 Very Satisfied	4	3 Undecided	2	1 Not Satisfied

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this interim evaluation show that the program did established a coordinated peer support system in the middle schools during 1989-90. Over 400 students and staff were identified as the natural peer support system in schools and trained in communication, substance abuse prevention, decision making, information referral, trust building, and other helping skills. The peers project provided helpful information and support to students facing both day-to-day problems and crisis situations.

The Portland Peers Project appeared to achieve its expected effect of increasing middle school students helping skills as measured by the Peer Helper Scale. Students significantly improved their skills in the five subscale areas of knowledge, helping, listening, trust, and student empowerment. The measure also demonstrated that program students were more skilled than comparison students at the end of the program, although the responses varied by school. Data on the helpers' skills and characteristics can help counselors decide if it is worthwhile for students to continue with the program.

The results of the initial assessment of drug use by middle school students are so inconclusive that we need to look at other methods to more reliably report the numbers of students who use alcohol and drugs. The Research and Evaluation Department is currently developing a comprehensive student survey of drug and alcohol use. Beginning in 1990-91, all students in grades 7 and 10 will be surveyed every other year to alternate with statewide drug and alcohol surveys.

The program may wish to consider developing ways to assist with home and school communications, one area for improvement identified by the parent survey. School-based peer helper programs might consider establishing more regular communications with parents to encourage their involvement and support. A parent orientation meeting to acquaint parents with the program is crucial. Regular informational updates on program activities, newsletters, or joint parent and child meetings to discuss middle school issues are some possibilities suggested by parents.

The project may also wish to consider asking schools to develop peer action plans describing how the peer assistants will be used in meaningful ways. This is an especially important issue to be addressed as the program expands into high schools in 1990-91.

Clearly there is much to be gained by building the linkages between student service professionals and peer helpers in schools. Peer helpers can provide both preventative and support functions. Opportunities for developing the natural helping networks in schools are boundless -- it merely requires a recognition of their existence and a willingness to identify peer helpers and work with them. The Portland Peers Project has provided guidelines for identifying and building these partnerships. The project also demonstrated that peer helpers exist among all types of student groups from academic achievers to at-risk youth. By identifying and supporting these students, we can see them move beyond our highest expectations. The program holds much promise for enriching student support systems in schools. In the words of one peer helper,

> *It gives me a good feeling to know I can help someone. It's natural to want to help friends and this program really helped me see how and when I can help.*

The concept of peer helping and students helping students is not a new idea. Peers are a pivotal link in an effective drug abuse prevention program in schools. Rather than just viewing students as receivers of curriculum, we can involve them in delivering aspects of the curriculum and applying it to real-life situations. Thus, peer helpers can help bridge the gap to troubled young people and bring them into a caring school community so that they may make positive contributions to their own lives and the lives of others.

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APPENDIX A

Summary of Initial Assessment of Student Drug Use

PORTLAND PEERS PROJECT
Summary of Counselors'Assessment of Student Drug Use
in Portland Middle Schools (n=17)
January 1990

1. **Mean percentage of middle school students at each grade who use alcohol and drugs as reported by middle school counselors.**

6th grade	12.2%	(range from 1% to 30%)
7th grade	22.3%	(range from 3% to 70%)
8th grade	30.2%	(range from 5% to 90%)

Counselors report that boys and girls are equal users of alcohol and drugs.

2. **Number of schools reporting this type of drug use by middle school students (rank order).**

17	Cigarettes (tobacco)
17	Alcohol
17	Marijuana
3	Hallucinogens (PCP, LSD, etc.)
2	Cocaine (crack)
2	Inhalants
1	Uppers (speed)
1	Other drugs: Valium, sleeping pills, and other prescription drugs

3. **Number of schools reporting how students obtain alcohol and drugs.**

13	Family/older siblings
12	Friends/peers
10	Parents
5	Theft from stores
4	Home
3	Theft from parents' drugs/alcohol supply
3	Older peers
2	Party selections
2	Streets/parks
2	Buy at store
2	Other adults/dealers/strangers
1	Anywhere it's available in St. John's community

APPENDIX B

Portland Peer Helper Scale

PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PEER HELPERS SCALE

Name_____

School_____

Grade_____Date_____

DIRECTIONS: Here are some sentences about helping peers. We would like to know your reaction. Please tell us if you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree. Circle one response for each sentence.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	I understand the feelings of friends and students.	SA	A	D	SD
2.	I listen carefully to what friends and students say.	SA	A	D	SD
3.	I am a person who others really trust.	SA	A	D	SD
4.	I talk more than I listen.	SA	A	D	SD
5.	I have a hard time being honest with students and adults.	SA	A	D	SD
6.	Friends and students listen to and trust my advice.	SA	A	D	SD
7.	I do NOT feel I have the skills to help others.	SA	A	D	SD
8.	When someone is angry, sad, or unkind, I want to change the subject.	SA	A	D	SD
9.	I can give helpful information to students with school problems.	SA	A	D	SD
10.	I have a hard time trusting adults.	SA	A	D	SD
11.	I can give helpful information to students with family problems.	SA	A	D	SD
12.	When people ask me for advice, I tell them what to do.	SA	A	D	SD
13.	I know what to do if a friend talks about suicide.	SA	A	D	SD
14.	I know I can be a good peer helper to all kinds of people.	SA	A	D	SD
15.	I am NOT able to help friends with decisions.	SA	A	D	SD
16.	When a friend has a problem, I know who can help handle it.	SA	A	D	SD
17.	I can give help with drug, alcohol, and tobacco information.	SA	A	D	SD
18.	I get tense when I hear problems of other students because I know I will NOT be able to help.	SA	A	D	SD
19.	It is difficult for me to discuss certain topics with students.	SA	A	D	SD
20.	I listen to a student's problem before I give advice.	SA	A	D	SD
21.	When I make a decision, I worry if I made the right choice.	SA	A	D	SD
22.	I know three people or places that can help a friend with a problem.	SA	A	D	SD
23.	I share my experiences & ideas in helping others make decisions.	SA	A	D	SD
24.	Friends and students trust me to keep secrets.	SA	A	D	SD
25.	I can usually find a quiet time and place to talk with a student.	SA	A	D	SD

APPENDIX C

Summary of Peer Helper Scale by School

Portland Peers Project
Summary of 1989-90 Peer Helper Scale by School

		PRE	KN	HE	LI	TR	DM	POST	KN	HE	LI	TR	DM	Change	KN	HE	LI	TR	DM
School 1	PPP	18.81	21.14	20.13	21.21	20.43		21.24	22.05	20.35	21.52	21.45		2.43	.91	.23	.31	1.02
	Control	18.32	20.96	19.75	21.00	20.44		20.13	22.09	20.32	21.77	20.96		1.81	1.14	.57	.77	.52
School 2	PPP	19.04	21.87	19.39	21.35	20.04		21.17	22.07	20.83	21.44	20.91		2.13	.22	1.44	.09	.87
	Control	20.29	20.76	19.95	21.05	20.91		20.33	21.52	20.10	21.62	21.05		.05	.76	.14	.57	.14
School 3	PPP	20.14	21.27	20.63	21.36	20.00		21.25	21.81	21.06	22.00	21.31		1.12	.55	.44	.64	1.31
	Control	20.53	20.90	20.06	22.39	20.47		20.95	21.32	20.11	22.21	21.00		.42	.42	.05	-.18	.53
School 4	PPP	20.10	21.60	19.85	21.30	20.15		20.85	21.95	19.95	21.30	20.25		.75	.35	.10	.00	.10
	Control	19.81	20.57	19.29	20.86	20.29		21.00	21.95	19.86	21.24	21.43		1.19	1.38	.57	.38	1.14
School 5	PPP	20.54	21.29	20.96	20.92	20.25		20.17	21.29	20.74	21.25	20.38		-.38	.00	-.22	.33	.13
	Control	21.22	20.61	19.57	21.61	20.35		21.09	20.78	19.17	21.09	21.04		-.13	.17	-.39	-.52	.70
School 6	PPP	20.56	20.12	19.12	20.67	19.96		21.08	21.69	20.85	21.31	20.85		.52	1.57	1.73	.64	.88
	Control	18.96	19.74	18.82	20.26	19.15		18.46	19.75	18.92	20.33	19.68		-.50	.01	.11	.07	.53
School 7	PPP	19.19	21.32	19.96	21.07	20.00		20.26	21.08	20.19	20.96	20.67		1.07	-.24	.23	-.11	.67
	Control	19.00	20.48	19.40	20.50	19.38		19.05	21.10	19.35	20.91	19.91		.05	.62	-.05	.41	.52
School 8	PPP	20.06	20.84	19.71	20.24	19.28		21.05	21.84	20.47	20.74	20.47		.99	1.00	.77	.50	1.20
	Control	20.31	21.11	19.89	20.68	19.82		20.58	21.32	20.11	20.90	20.68		.27	.21	.22	.21	.86
School 9	PPP	20.38	20.86	20.25	21.05	20.21		20.81	21.33	20.33	21.00	20.91		.43	.48	.08	-.05	.69
	Control	19.91	20.14	18.95	19.57	19.57		20.57	21.10	19.57	20.19	19.71		.67	.95	.62	.62	.14
School 10	PPP	20.46	21.93	21.43	21.93	21.40		20.93	22.07	20.93	22.40	22.20		.47	.13	-.50	.47	.80
	Control	20.44	20.94	20.50	21.78	20.28		19.83	21.78	20.89	22.67	21.00		-.61	.84	.39	.89	.72
School 11	PPP	19.72	21.11	19.42	21.71	20.90		21.11	22.90	21.53	22.61	21.00		1.39	1.78	2.11	.91	.11
	Control	19.93	21.63	19.38	21.67	21.00		20.81	22.44	20.25	20.94	21.13		.88	.81	.88	-.73	.13
School 12	PPP	20.35	21.21	20.25	20.95	20.13		19.58	21.67	21.13	21.33	20.42		-.77	.46	.88	.38	.29
	Control	19.40	19.69	19.31	20.29	19.12		19.83	20.65	19.65	21.11	20.33		.43	.96	.33	.82	1.22
School 13	PPP	19.58	21.40	20.84	21.24	20.04		21.12	22.73	22.00	21.84	20.32		1.54	1.33	1.16	.60	.28
	Control	20.17	21.83	20.74	21.88	20.54		20.70	22.92	20.63	21.71	21.13		.52	1.08	-.11	-.17	.59
School 14	PPP	19.25	21.05	19.08	20.83	19.46		20.92	21.04	20.29	21.75	20.29		1.67	.00	1.21	.92	.83
	Control	19.65	19.30	18.95	19.90	19.25		18.65	17.80	18.74	18.81	18.11		-1.00	-1.50	-.21	-1.09	-1.15
School 15	PPP	20.70	21.90	20.00	21.40	20.60		21.60	22.60	19.90	22.70	21.30		.90	.70	-.10	1.30	.70
	Control	19.00	19.30	17.30	19.50	19.60		15.10	17.00	17.50	18.20	17.60		-3.90	-2.30	.20	-1.30	-2.00
School 16	PPP	19.82	21.56	20.00	22.12	21.88		21.77	22.71	21.59	22.29	22.24		1.94	1.14	1.59	.18	.36
	Control	21.06	22.11	20.00	21.67	21.05		21.21	22.26	20.50	21.47	22.11		.16	.16	.50	-.19	1.05
School 17	PPP	20.96	21.23	19.85	20.77	20.52		20.67	22.04	20.74	21.56	20.96		-.29	.81	.90	.79	.44
	Control	21.74	21.75	21.00	21.74	20.30		20.73	20.95	21.27	21.14	20.46		-1.01	-.80	.27	-.59	.16
MEAN*	PPP	19.99	21.27	20.00	21.14	20.27		20.88	21.90	20.79	21.57	20.90		.89	.64	.79	.43	.63
	Control	20.06	20.73	19.70	21.03	20.10		20.06	21.10	19.89	21.06	20.53		.00	.37	.20	.02	.43

* This is the mean of clear and intact student groups.

APPENDIX D

Parent Questionnarie

PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PORTLAND PEERS PROJECT - PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Your child is a peer helper, peer assistant, or natural helper in his or her middle school this year. The Peers Project is interested in what parents think of the program. Your answers are important; they will be considered in program operations. Please complete this questionnaire and return it in the enclosed stamped envelope as soon as possible. The survey is anonymous, so please do not sign your name. Thank you.

1. Has the program informed you about peer helper activities during the year?
   _____Yes _____No

2. How were you informed about or involved in the program (peer helper, natural helper, or peer assistance) at your child's school this year? (check all that apply)

   _____ Orientation meeting about peer helpers
   _____ Training of peer helpers
   _____ Parent's night activities
   _____ Advisory committee
   _____ Preparing for the Drug-Free Schools training
   _____ Notes from school counselor
   _____ Not involved
   _____ Other: please describe_____

3. Did your child talk with you about their role as a peer helper?

Weekly		Monthly		Never
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

4. How satisfied are you that the program experiences helped your child?

Very Satisfied		Undecided		Not Satisfied
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

5. As a parent of a peer helper, how would you like to be involved in the program in the future?
   _____

   _____

6. Additional comments _____

   _____

Questions? Please call Stephanie Mitchell, Evaluation Department, 249-2000 extension 238.

APPENDIX E

Summary of Responses to Parent Questionnarie

Portland Public Schools

1989-90 Portland Peers Project
Summary of Parent Questionnaire (N=124)
May 1990

1. Has the program informed you about peer helper activities during the year?

	Number	Percent
Yes	82	66%
No	42	34%

2. How were you informed about or involved in the program (peer helper, natural helper, or peer assistance) at your child's school this year? (check all that apply)

	Number	Percent
Orientation Meeting	53	28%
Notes from School Counselor	35	18%
Other	26	14%
Parent's Night Activities	24	13%
Training of Peer Helpers	22	12%
Not Involved	22	12%
Advisory Committee	5	2%
Preparing for Drug-Free Years	3	1%

3. Did your child talk with you about their role as a peer helper?

	Weekly		Monthly		Never
N	28	26	40	23	7
%	23%	21%	32%	19%	5%

4. How satisfied are you that the program experiences helped your child?

	Very Satisfied		Undecided		Not Satisfied
N	50	30	42	1	1
%	40%	24%	34%	1%	1%

Summary of Parent Comments

5. How would you like to be involved in the peer helper program in the future?

40 Want more information about the peer helpers program, i.e., the types of training, monthly activities, expectations of peer helpers, student involvement with peers, and effectiveness of the helpers. Want to be kept more regularly informed by mail, newsletter, monthly calendar, or personal note from school counselor.

8 Willing to volunteer to help with training of peer helpers, parent orientation, help with peer counseling, drug-free training, office work, and other activities.

7 Would like 2-3 Parent/Peer Helper Nights each year, perhaps a presentation by the school counselor on the middle school child, a potluck dinner to meet other peer helpers and parents and learn how the students have helped others.

7 Not interested in being involved or too busy.

4 Would like to continue to help on the Advisory Committee.

4 An orientation meeting for parents and students would have been nice.

2 An orientation and evaluation meeting for parents with statistical results of the program. For example, student surveys of interactions with peers to see how they used the training, how often they are being used by peers, what kind of assistance they are providing, is successful, etc. The students could participate and describe activities at the evaluation meeting.

2 This is a program for kids, I'm not sure parents should be involved. Kids seem to feel their own strengths better without parents around.

o I would like an individual meeting with the school counselor and the child to be sure the peer helper is performing satisfactory and maintaining the high standards of this program.

o Maybe, more short notes about activities, perhaps written by kids themselves.

o I would like my child to come to me with unresolved problems, so I can help.

o I would like to have heard what happened to the idea of monthly meetings for students.

o I don't know. I believe my daughter got a lot out of the program, but my primary involvement was through discussions in our home.

6. Additional Comments

14 The peer program has been a great experience for my child. She actively used the training and had some pretty big problems shared with her. She says the training was a "turning point" in her life. We hope the program continues in high school.

8 We were very disappointed not to receive more information about the program. There was no communication from the school about the purpose, goals, objectives, and expectations of peer helpers. I'd like feedback about my child's involvement.

5 There were not many activities or things for peer helpers to do this year. I'm not aware of any activities my child was involved in after the training.

6 The peer helper program was an excellent opportunity for my child and gave him more self-confidence, self-esteem, and an improved sense of self-worth.

3 Expand the program so all students can benefit from peer helper training.

2 I feel this is a good program to make students more responsible people.

o I think the program needs to be better publicized in my daughter's school.

o We are under the impression that this program is by-the-students, for-the-students, and parental involvement would not be welcome.

o More teenagers call for advice, it's like Dear Abby at our home.

o It would be nice if it wasn't just a popularity contest!

o It's a great idea. Peers can help each other more than parents sometimes.

o How can we get them to apply the same principles to siblings?

o I like the peer concept, but is adult supervision adequate and appropriate?

o My child is still the same!

o My son says that the training helped him be a better listener.

o I was not pleased with the pull-out aspect of the program that continually took my child out of an academic class.

o I don't feel I want to be involved. I feel my daughter is mature and responsible enough to handle this on her own and family conversations periodically are sufficient parental involvement.